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THE HIGHER TEACHING OF LATIN
GRAMMAR IN IRELAND DURING
THE NINTH CENTURY

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This paper goes one step further than my "Construe Marks in Hiberno-Latin Manuscripts", 1957 (Meded. d. Kon. Ned. Akad. v. Wetensch., afd. Lettk., New Series, vol. 20, nr. 10), though it still is far from the work envisaged by Dr. W. Gs. Hellinga and myself to examine and assess the first five pages of the St. Gall Priscian (*Codex Sangallensis* 904).

For this second stage I have chosen from that MS. the first column (*a*) of p. 138, but the purpose is the same: to try and "follow the direction of thoughts of an Irish grammarian in the ninth century when reading Priscianus or expounding him to Irish pupils".¹⁾ I hold that it is possible to work this out by evaluating the Irishman's additions to the Latin original—both signs and glosses—in their context.

Why column *a* of p. 138? The choice was curbed by two considerations only; I wanted some page from the middle of the codex to see whether the careful studying shown in the beginning of the text was kept up (so many works start interestingly and then taper off—and not only in the Middle Ages!), and I wanted a part from *Liber Octavus: De Verbo*, as verbs are so highly important in Irish grammar. Nevertheless the chosen column remained an unknown quantity (and therefore kept its random quality), because there is no facsimile-edition of *Codex Sangallensis* 904, and because the *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus* only prints the Irish glosses and a rock-bottom minimum of Priscian.²⁾ (So any photostat one orders can store all the elements of surprise one might wish for.)

Column *a* of p. 138 contains the Latin text that is published by Hertz in Keil's *Grammatici Latini*, vol. II,³⁾ from the end of line 19 on p. 370 to the middle of line 5 on p. 372—beginning and ending in mid-sentence. In my edition of the St. Gall-column *infra* the interrupted sentences are, of course, given complete;

¹⁾ "Construe Marks", p. 2 (262)—the first pagenummer is that of the separate publication, the second that of the Volume.

²⁾ Stokes (Whitley) and John Strachan, *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus*, Cambridge 1901–1903, vol. II, pp. 49–224.

³⁾ One has always to keep in mind that the Priscianus-edition by Hertz (*Prisciani grammatici Caesariensis Institutionum Grammaticarum Libri XVIII*) in two volumes (I and II) occupies vol. II and part of vol. III of *Grammatici Latini ex recensione Henrici Keilii*. It is rather confusing that Hertz I is Keil II, and Hertz II Keil III.

even so, to follow Priscian's argumentation one had better start from the beginning of the eighth 'book'.

Our modern difficulties in understanding Priscian are different from those of his readers in the ninth century but they are not less. Dangerous pitfalls are the changing systems of technical terms. The Irish tried to translate Priscian's system—if one thinks about it this procedure strikes one as modern, individualistic, and indicating a genuine respect for the potentialities of their own language. After all, scholars of Western Europe have done the same after the Renaissance in different languages and for centuries with the technical terms of "Latin Grammar" in general. (That is why nowadays we so desperately need Marouzeau's "Lexique de la terminologie linguistique", and why we at the moment find it safer to keep to the Latin 'originals'!) Still this does not mean that the Renaissance-system and that of Priscian are the same.

Another pitfall is the prejudice that it would be just as well to reject 'Priscian' as negligible material and poor reasoning. In my opinion Priscian commands respect, and the teachers of Priscian in Ireland during the ninth century seem to me highly intelligent people.

This is how Priscian begins his *De Verbo* :

"A verb is that part of speech which has tenses and moods, no case, and which expresses action or enduring" (: *Verbum est pars orationis cum temporibus et modis, sine casu, agendi vel patiendi significativum*). "In this definition are included the verbal forms limited by number and person, as well as the forms not limited by number and person" (: *hac enim definitione omnia tam finita quam infinita verba comprehenduntur*). "Moreover neutral verbs—or absolute verbs—and deponents have from their very nature an active or a passive meaning" (: *et neutra enim [quae dicuntur absoluta]*⁴) *et deponentia omnimodo naturaliter vel in actu sunt vel in passione*).⁵ Follows the 'etymology' of *verbum* (as a technical term), and after that some instances are given of the word used in a wider sense.

⁴) According to these square brackets and the listed *Variae lectiones* the Continental MSS. used by Hertz for his edition lack the technical term *absoluta*—except Codex *H* (Halberstadiensis). On the other hand all three MSS. of Irish provenance: *G*, *L* and *K* (Sangallensis, "Leydensis" and Caroliruhensis) have it. One has to keep in mind that *GLK* quite often represent good old readings. (Here their reading is "*et neutra et absoluta*".)

⁵) Nowadays we usually speak of "intransitive verbs" instead of "neutral" or "absolute verbs".

This ends the introduction.⁶⁾ Then comes the statement:

“The verb has eight ‘accidents’” (: *Verbo accidunt octo*); these are: *significatio* or *genus*, *tempus*, *modus*, *species*, *figura*, *coniugatio*, *persona* and *numerus*. They are all successively dealt with in longer and shorter chapters of the ‘book’: these chapters really constitute *Liber Octavus: De Verbo*. But before this Priscian admonishes (and in this section our column 138a is contained):

“However, one has to keep in mind that there are verbs which miss some of the above mentioned accidents, and this either of necessity (unavoidably), or by chance” (: *Sciendum autem, quaedam verba inveniri defectiva quorundam supra dictorum accidentium et hoc vel naturae necessitate fieri vel fortunae casu*).

- (A) The necessity may arise from (1) the meaning (: *significatione*), or (2) the inconvenience (the awkwardness) of the component parts (: *incommoditate, id est inconsonantia* ⁷⁾ *elementorum*).
- (B) The chance may arise from (1): the words or expressions are not used by the authors (: *inusitata, quibus non inveniuntur usi auctores*), or from (2): the words are not elegant, they are rough or harsh (: *inconcinna, turpia, aspera*).⁸⁾

In the examples he gives of these four divisions Priscian goes beyond verbal forms. For instance he remarks: of necessity and from their meanings the (feminine) words *nupta* (: married woman, wife) and *puerpera* (: woman in childbed) can have no masculine (forms or equivalents) *nuptus* and *puerperus* (: *si velimus masculinum dicere ab eo quod est ‘nupta’ ‘nuptus’ vel a ‘puerpera’ ‘puerperus’, oppugnat ipsa rerum natura propter significationem*).⁹⁾ In pronouns of the third person we cannot use a vocative form.

Now we draw near to column 138a — we reach the first (interrupted) sentence. For the (complete) Latin text see p. 12 *infra*.

⁶⁾ I refer once again to “Construe Marks”, and now to p. 21 (281): “Moreover the lay-out of the pages of Medieval books did not help readers quickly to pick out a thread of logical argument. Centuries had to go by until ‘we’ evolved our present-day system of *spacing* the text by paragraphs, indentation, bigger type against smaller type, (big) parts of the material written on being blank.” Of course Hertz’s edition has a more modern lay-out, but it is very ‘nineteenth-century-German’ and it still leaves Priscian’s text difficult to analyse.

⁷⁾ Hertz here makes a mistake; he prints (p. 370, lines 1 and 2): “*et in commoditate, id est in consonantia elementorum*”. On p. 371, line 5 the words occur correctly.

⁸⁾ This abstract with (A), (B), (1) and (2) is my own modernization; see note 6.

⁹⁾ Priscian adds that Plautus has used ‘*nuptus*’ for ‘*maritus*’.

“The pronoun *sui, sibi, se, a se* can have no nominative because it always shows a third person

either acting himself and himself suffering by it:

paenitet illum sui
invidet sibi
accusat se

or acting himself and someone else acting in relation to him (too):

rogat, ut sui causa facias
petit, ut sibi concedas
precatur, ut se custodias.

When this happens, i.e. (when and) because the same person acts and suffers – either from himself [138a] or by another – [if the same person is involved in an ‘active’ and a ‘passive’ situation], there is no need of a nominative case, but only of that (case) with which an ‘active’ verb usually is linked (: *cui solet adiungi verbum, quod actum significat*), that is the genitive, the dative, the accusative, the ablative – and those this pronoun really has (: *quos et habet hoc pronomen*). The verb(al form) itself contains the nominative of the acting person. For if I say: *rogat te, ut ad se venias*, without doubt you understand in what I have said *rogat* at the same time *ille*, which is nominative.”

The same natural logic forbids words like *quis, qualis, quantus* and suchlike, to be used in the vocative, because they are ‘interrogative’, and ‘indefinite’, and ‘third person’, and mostly linked with somebody (/something) who (/which) is absent or thought to be absent, whereas the vocative is directed in speech towards a definite and present person – that is towards a ‘second person’.¹⁰⁾

(A 2:)

Because of the (resulting) awkwardness, the discordant sound, it is impossible to form feminines from *cursor* and *risor* in the ordinary way, by analogically substituting *-rix* for *-or*. [The result would be *curatrix* and *risrix*, both very unmelodious.]

That is why Cicero in “*Tusculanarum*” V (2, 5)¹¹⁾ used the feminine *expultrix* (from the masculine *expulsor*), and in “*Tusculanarum*” V (20, 58) the form *tonstriculae*: from *tonsor* he made a feminine

¹⁰⁾ I hold that in this passage the *G*-readings are better than the text chosen by Hertz; see *infra*.

¹¹⁾ The figures in brackets are those from Hertz’s *Index Scriptorum*. I have not checked them.

tonstrix by adding *t*, and from this the diminutive *tonstricula* (: *ab eo quod est tonsor tonstrix fecit femininum addita .t. et ex eo (femininum) diminutivum tonstricula*), as from *nutrix* *nutricula*. And something like this had to be done (: *et ea per naturam*).

(Follows the statement for the twofold division in the words we are not allowed to use *fortunaē casu* (B, *vide supra*) (: *Per fortunam quoque duobus modis prohibemur quaedam proferre, vel quod inusitata sunt vel (quod)* ¹²) *inconcinna et turpia vel aspera prolatu videntur esse*).

(B 1:)

We could – analogically make and – use words like ‘*faux*’, ‘*prex*’, ‘*dicio*’. The ‘positive’ of *faris* ought to be ‘*for*’, the passive of *do* ought to be ‘*dor*’. [These examples are highly cryptic for ‘foreign speakers’,¹³ and we shall see that here the Irish got into difficulties.] These words would be perfectly all right, but as they are not found in literary language, we refuse to utter them (: *ea enim quamvis ratione regulae bene dicantur, tamen, quia in usu auctorum non inveniuntur, recusamus dicere*).

(B 2:)

Non-elegant, rough or harsh in pronunciation would be ‘*metuturus*’ or ‘*metuiturus*’. “ ‘*Nutritrix*’, which analogically ought to be used – in *-tor*-ending *masculina* originating from verbs change *-or* to *-rix* and make (thus) *feminina* (: *in tor enim terminantia* ¹⁴) *masculina quae ex verbis nascuntur mutant or in rix et faciunt feminina*): *doctor doctrix, victor victrix*; now as the masculine is [138b] *nutritor*, from that ought to come analogically ‘*nutritrix*’ – has its middle syllable cut out *euphoniae causa*, the same as *bobus* for ‘*bovibus*’.” And this not only happens in different words (but in expressions too): ‘*cum nobis*’ is ugly, one has to use *nobiscum*.

Finally – before Priscian starts with his (first) chapter on *Significatio* – there is a long passage that could best be summarized

¹² This second *quod* not in *GLK*. (And strictly the second *quod* is not necessary, though it makes the sentence easier to read.)

¹³ ‘*Faux*’ and ‘*prex*’ would be the nominatives singular of the substantives *fauces* and *preces*. But ‘*dicio*’? Would that be a verbal form or a nomen? And is *faris* to be understood as a verbal form or as a ‘comparative’?

¹⁴ *G* has *terminata* (compare page 9 and line 40 of column 138a). According to Hertz three of his MSS. show that reading: *BDG*. This means of the ‘Irish’ MSS. only St. Gall, and not Karlsruhe and Leiden; on the other hand two Continental ones: ‘Bamberg’ (*B*) and ‘Bern’ (*D*).

as: Priscian objects to 'homonyms' in the language, and sees 'dissimilation' as a necessary corrective.

So far the context of column 138*a*.

What did the Irish teacher tell his classes according to the evidence of Sangallensis 904, p. 138?

He belonged to a tradition, for the three most important complete Priscian-MSS. of Irish ninth-century-provenance we know at present ¹⁵⁾ "*ita inter se conspirant, ut pateat, eos ex eodem fonte ductos esse, ita inter se dissentiunt, ut alius ex alio descriptus esse nequeat.*" ¹⁶⁾ In some ways one can even speak of a (slightly diverging) Irish recension of Priscian: "*insunt tamen recensio*n*i huic Scotiae hic illic genuinae doctrinae vestigia, saepe tamen communem exemplaris Theodoriani fontem, ex quo hos etiam libros manasse docent subscriptiones supra laudatae, relinquit.*" ¹⁷⁾

The construe-marks and the glosses are part of the Irish tradition too; they could be (and often can be proved to have been) copied from older exemplars.

However, the danger of a tradition is always this: if a text somewhere and somehow has become faulty, the contemporary scholar has to use his wits and find an appropriate solution *ad hoc*. He has to make use of what he has got.

For there are two possibilities — he may have gathered from his exemplar that something is amiss, and then he can leave an open space to be filled in later if he is lucky. Or he does not know that the passage is wrong, it only appears 'very difficult' to him and in his added comments we can sometimes see him try to make it work. In this he can be very clever.

At all events, let us not blame a medieval teacher (whether he belongs to the 'Continental' or the 'Insular' tradition) for the fact that he did not have the opportunity to consult the Keil-Hertz-edition of 'Priscian', and hunt there for the best variant reading!

In the here following edition of the St. Gall-column least important are those spelling-variants which commonly occur in Insular Latin, e.g. in line 2: *adiungui* (instead of *adiungi*); in line 3: *genitivo* (*genetivo*); 6: *intelligis* (*intellegis*); 15 *difficiunt* (*deficiunt*);

¹⁵⁾ See "Construe Marks", pp. 2 and 3 (262/263). The most important data are still to be found in J. F. Kenney, *The Sources for the Early History of Ireland*, an Introduction and Guide, vol. I: Ecclesiastical (New York 1929—all published), pp. 674–677.

¹⁶⁾ Hertz, *Praefatio*, p. XVI.

¹⁷⁾ Hertz, *Praefatio*, on the same page XVI.

18 *motatione* (*mutatione*); 20 *motavit* (*mutavit*); 28 *furtunam* (*fortunam*); 30, 37 *inconcina* (*inconcinna*); 39 *debuisset* (*debuisset*); 41 *motant* (*mutant*).

Of slight importance too are variants like: line 3 *et ablativo* (Hertz: *vel ablativo*); 30 *vel inconcina* (*vel quod inconcina*); 31 *Inusitata quibus* (*inusitata sunt quibus*); 41/2 *feminina doctor* (*feminina ut doctor*).

A real variant is 40 *terminata*¹⁴ (*terminantia*); the reading is supported by two Continental MSS. Even more interesting is the 'lectio facilior' in the first Cicero-quotation: 22/3 *indicatrix* (*indagatrix*); this seems a mistake of long standing as the greater part of the MSS. are here at fault.

On the other hand Hertz has—in my opinion—chosen the less correct reading *infinitivis* in his p. 370, 25. Here the St. Gall-Priscian has *infinitis* (line 8 *infra*), as have (Hertz's) Bernensis, Halberstadiensis, Bambergensis and the Leyden-Priscian. Clearly the context needs the exact opposite of (*de*)*finitis*, and the form 'infinitivis' could have crept in by way of the preceding 'interrogativis'.

Concerning the first line of p. 371 I again disagree with Hertz on the clause *quae tertiae maxime solent iungi personae (et absentis vel quasi absentis)*. In this arrangement Hertz sees the 'archetypus', and he believes that the longer formula's, like that of Sangallensis for instance, *quae tertiae sine dubio sunt personae et maxime solent iungi personae (absentis vel quasi absentis)*, harbor a gloss. On the contrary I am convinced that Hertz's 'archetypus' is an abridgement of the original.

It is mentioned here once more¹⁸ that in lines 33–35 the (Irish) tradition has broken down. (This matter shall be dealt with on pp. 23–31.)

The text of the column has been corrected, and twice at least by a second hand. In line 5 this scribe has—by squeezing in two very narrow u's—improved on the shorthand-abbreviation 'nominativum' of the first hand (so that it now reads 'nominativum'). It was he also who wrote *Per furtunam* (line 28), in a space left open by the first scribe.

(If I rightly understand the difficulty the first scribe might possibly have felt that '*Per fortunam*' was a poor substitute for the earlier '*fortuna casu*' (the (B) of my summary on p. 5); the other scribe decided: 'It is the reading of the exemplar', and put the words in.)

¹⁸) Compare p. 7 *supra*.

Perhaps it was the second hand too who inserted the small o in (the Greek word) ACYNΦoNIAN (line 15). I cannot decide who erased '*facit*' (18) and corrected it to '*fit*'. The '*ex*' above the line (*expulsor*, 20) is a correction by the first scribe; the h above '*abet*' (4) probably by the second.

General observations

The "additions to the Latin original—both signs and glosses" (see p. 3 *supra*) I divide into four groups:

- A. Construe-marks
- B. Construe-glosses
- C. Translations (of Latin phrases)
- D. Plus-information.

Ad A. I recapitulate the findings of my 1957-paper:

The different forms or symbols of the construe-marks have no fixed meaning in themselves. The possibility to read them lies in their alternation. At least two of them, i.e. two of each variety: single-dots, double-dots, dot-dashes, etc. belong together.

The construe-mark-*group* comes to an end when the signs change over

1. *as to form* (e.g. a new form intervenes: after colons there come dot-dashes, etc.), or
2. *as to position* (the identical sign, but *over* instead of *under* the (connected) word, or the other way round).

If the intervening space between signs is wide (for instance several lines of the main text),

- I the sign chosen is more elaborate, or
- II an *adit*-gloss is used.

(In 138*a* all of these instances occur; we even find an elaboration of I: a sign in the middle margin (to the right of line 34) which links with its partner across three whole pages!!)

B. Construe-glosses border on construe-marks; they are used to give insight into the Latin construction(s) where construe-marks cannot bridge the difficulty.

C. and D. Groups C. and D. are, of course, the most interesting; D. for its evidence about the intellectual grasp of the Irish teaching (e.g. the expanding of examples, the cross-references). On the surface C. would seem easier to interpret, but this is not the case

as many of the words probably are part of the Irish (ninth-century) system of grammatical terms, on which at the moment we are badly informed.

It is precisely one of the points of the present paper to direct attention to that aspect of the glosses. It makes all the difference whether one translates—for instance—“*ar ní hiforgnúis atá in cesad*” as “for the passion is not in form” (*sic Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus* II, p. 153) or as “for (these verbs) are not passive as to form”. The first sounds like a crude statement, the second is a scholarly observation. And this is symptomatic.

In my opinion it is impossible to ‘understand’ the “Glosses on Priscian (St. Gall)” through the (superficial and tentative) translation in the *Thesaurus*. This means no disparagement to that work (which was published in 1903!), but we must realize that we ought to move forward.

In the now following Commentary lines are referred to by their numbers only. Though all expansions in the text-edition of column 138*a* (and its glosses) are indicated, the conventional Insular symbol *.i.* (*id est*) before most of the glosses has been kept.

The additional lines of 137*b* and 138*b* too are those of St. Gall, and therefore variant-readings have to be taken into account (for instance in (–8) Keil-Hertz has “*praeterea*” instead of “*propterea*”). In the additions I indicate no expansions and do not give glosses; of construe-marks only those relevant to column 138*a*.

The text of Sangallensis 904, p. 138, column a

- 8 . . propterea sui sibi se ase
- 7 nominatiuum hoc pronomen habere non potest , ideo quia quotien
- 6 hoc pronomen ponitur ostendit tertiam personam uel ipsam et a(-)
- 5 gere simul et pati ase · ut penitet illum sui · in(-)
- 4 uidet sibi · accusat se · uel et ipsam agere et aliam
- 3 extrinsecus in eam ut rogat ut sui causa fa(-)
- 2 cias · petit ut sibi concedas · precatur ut se custodias . .
- 1 quod cum (f)it id est quando eadem persona et agit et patitur uel ase

(138a)

- 1 uel ab alia non indiget nominatiuo casu: sed eo cui so(-)
- 2 let adiungi uerbum · quod actum significat id est
- 3 genitiuo uel datiuo uel accusatiuo et ablatiuo
- 4 quos et habet hoc pronomen , ipsum enim uerbum agentis per(-)
- 5 sonae nominatiuum in se habet · si enim dicam rogat te ut

Commentary

Sed (1) is linked to *indiget* (1) by dot-comma's in order that the 'class' may read: *non indiget nominativo casu, sed indiget eo* etc. *Eo* (1) has been given a construe-gloss: *.i. casu* in order to understand: *sed eo casu cui solet adiungi verbum* etc.

(Here one can ask oneself: why a construe-gloss, and not two construe-marks—colons for instance—linking *eo* with the *casu* (1) of the main text? If I see rightly this would have created a new difficulty, loosening and isolating the relative *cui*; two additional 'marks' would have been needed to bring that back into line.)

Pronomen (4) has the construe-gloss *.i. sui* to remind everybody that Priscian still is speaking about *sui, sibi, se, a se* (–8).

(Unnecessary to add that construe-marks across eleven lines—and moreover on to a different page—would have been awkward.)

Ipsum enim verbum agentis personae nominativum in se habet (4/5) is presented in Irish by the gloss: *.i. sluintir persan tresin brethir cenibé ainmnid*. This can be translated as “person is expressed by (or: through) the verb though there be (is) no nominative” (or: “though it is no nominative”). Three aspects are interesting. First of all: the Irish sentence is no (literal) translation—the idea has been given a different slant and it has been integrated into the official “scholia”

(compare for instance the long gloss on p. 197(a)—according to *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus* II, p. 188—especially the part: *ar cia sluindid briathar persin ní fris arícht—frislonnd persine—act is frislonnd gnimo persine principaliter arícht: “for though a verb expresses person, it was not for that found (invented)—for the expressing of person—but it is for the expressing of the action of a person principaliter (that) it was found (invented)”*.

Secondly: *persan, bréthir* (dat. and acc. of *briathar*=word), *sluindid* (= expresses, signifies) and *ainmnid* (derivative of *ainm*=name) belong to the system of technical terms. Lastly, the gloss starts near the verbal form *habet* (5) because—according to Irish syntax—this is the beginning of the sentence (the Irish would ‘see’ the Latin sentence as: *habet enim ipsum verbum nominativum personae agentis in se*).

- 6 ad sé uenias sine dubio intelligis in eo quod dixi
- 7 rogat simul et ille qui est nominatiuus , Haec eadem ^{praedicta} ra(-)
- 8 tio naturalis etiam in interrogatiuis et infinitis
- 9 nominibus quae tertiae sine dubio sunt personae et maxime
- 10 solent iungi personae ^{.i. ecndaire cian ut ille} absenti ^{.i. ecndaire ocus} uel quasi absentis ut
- 11 quis qualis quantus et similibus uocatiuum esse

Enim (5) is linked with its logical verbal form *intelligis* (6) by double-dots (to clarify the reasoning: *si dicam* "rogat te ut ad sé venias" *intelligis enim—sine dubio—in eo quod dixi*, etc.).

(Lines 7–14 seem to me important for the transmission of the Priscian-text. On p. 6 *supra* I have given my translation, and on p. 9 I have defended the St. Gall-readings against the text of Hertz.)

Triangle-dots link the verbal form *prohibet* (12) with its subject *Haec (eadem ratio naturalis)* (5/6); the construe-gloss (?) *praedicta* helps to understand that *eadem ratio naturalis* is still the 'afore-mentioned' reflection that some parts-of-speech miss (some of their accidents *naturae necessitate* and *significationis causa* (see my A I on p. 5 *supra*).

(*Personae*) *absenti* (10) is glossed by *.i. ecndairc cian ut ille*—this can be translated as: "far absent, *ut ille*" (or as: "far absence, *ut ille*"), whereas (*personae*) *quasi absenti* (10) is glossed by *.i. ecndairc ocus*: "near absent" or "near absence" (probably we must read on and connect *ut quis*, the next words of the main text).

Although the two glosses interlink so narrowly, I can only supply the first one with its context—the second I believe to understand by inference.

Écndairc cian ("far absent") in my opinion draws us again to p. 197(a)—which is the beginning of "Liber XII De Pronomine"—where the Priscian-text defines *ille* as a "pronomen" for a third person (who is) *absens vel longe posita* (Keil-Hertz I, p. 577). We first came—by chance as we thought—to that same page when commenting on the Irish gloss of line 5 *supra*. Chance, however, is ruled out by a second reference. I think we are entitled to the conclusion that the Irish teachers—as good teachers do—helped their pupils by giving cross-references to related sections of the handbook, by enlarging, by working backwards and forwards through the text.

And now what about *ecndairc ocus*?

As *personae absenti* called to mind the Irish scholium on *ille* ("far absent"), "near absent" could be an (Irish) comment on *quis* called forth by three examples of Priscian: "*quis scripsit? ego*", "*quis scripsit? tu*", "*quis scripsit? ille*" (Keil-Hertz II, p. 13, line 23). In other words: when somebody asks (using an interrogative (pro)noun of the third person) about an unknown person who performed some action, he may find out that the unknown was really absent: *ille*, but on the other hand he may find out that the unknown whom

- 12 ^{∴ .i. huare ata tertpersin immechomarcatar treo is airi ni techtat togarthid}
 prohibet .. *quia* uocatiuus ad aliquam finitam fit et praesen(-)
- 13 tem personam ad quam oratio dirigitur id est ad se(-)
- 14 ^{.i. roblat ar chuit foidd cenid rubat ar chuit suin}
 cundam, INcommoditate uero uel inconsonan(-)
 ∴ . ~ /.
- 15 ^{∴ ∴ ∴ ∴ ∴ / . fone . uox}
 tia quam graeci ACY[∴]N[∴]Φ[∴]o[∴]N[∴]IAN ∴ uocant diffici(-)

he thought absent (*quasi absens!*), in reality was present: *ego, tu*. "Near absent" could be a single, glorious short-circuiting between *absens longe (posita)* and *praesens iuxta* (which Priscian uses about *iste*).¹⁹

The whole statement of lines 7–14 is summarized by the Irish gloss *.i. huare ata tertpersin immechomarcatar treo is airi ní techtat togarthid*: "because they are third-persons about which one asks through them, it is therefore (that) they do not possess a vocative."²⁰ Significantly (again—compare line 5) the gloss is placed next to the key-word *prohibet* (12).

With *INcommoditate* (14) begins group A 2 (see pp. 5 and 6 *supra*) and its examples. A modern lay-out would start a new paragraph; the Irish scribes tried at least to help their readers by the use of two large capital letters. Directly at the beginning of the new 'paragraph' the words which are to be rejected are commented upon by the Irish gloss: *.i. robiat ar chuit folid cenid rubat ar chuit suin*: "they can exist as regards substance (signification), though they cannot exist as regards sound".²¹

The different sets of construe-marks which link the structural parts of ACYNΦONIAN (15) (*ἀσυνφωνία*) to its Latin equivalent *inconsonantia* (14/15)—diagonal-dots connect *in* and A, dot-dashes *con* and CYN, diagonal-line-dot-to-right-s *sonantia* and ΦONIAN—I find interesting for their scrap of evidence in the heated (modern) controversy about the knowledge of Greek in (ninth-century) Ireland. The spelling of the Greek word here may be 'provincial'—even barbarian—but its meaning was taught through insight, not by rote. This view is confirmed by the occurrence of the additional gloss equating (Greek) *fone* (*φωνη*) and (Latin) *vox*.

I think it absurd to exaggerate the knowledge of Greek in medieval Irish civilization, but one has to admit that teachers-on-university-level gave thought to that language and effort. (A study on the Greek of the St. Gall-Priscian could be very important.)

¹⁹ The Irish (technical) term for *praesens* is *frecndairc*, a word which occurs frequently but which is therefore difficult to trace. The *Dictionary of the Irish Language* based mainly on Old and Middle Irish Materials, published by the Royal Irish Academy (Fasciculus IV: *fochratae—futhu*, publ. in 1957) certainly does not list all the instances. As far as I can make out "*frecndairc ocus*" (which would be the translation of *praesens iuxta*) has not been registered.

Neither can I find whether there is a second instance of *ecndairc ocus*.
²⁰ The translation in the *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus* reads: "because it is third persons which are interrogated by them, therefore they have not a vocative" (Vol. II, p. 152).

²¹ Translation *Thesaurus*: "they can be in respect of substance, though they cannot be in respect of sound."

line 15 repeated

15 tia quam graeci $\dot{\text{A}}\text{C}\ddot{\text{Y}}\text{N}\Phi\text{O}\dot{\text{N}}\text{I}\ddot{\text{A}}\text{N}$ · uocant diffici(-)

16 unt quaedam · ut si uelimus ab eo quod est cursor

17 et risor feminina facere secundum analogi(-)

18 am motatione or. in rix. absonum fit et

19 incongruum naturae literarum : unde cicero uolens

20 ab eo quod est pulsor proferre femininum motauit

21 .s. in t. et expultrix dixit tusculanarum .u.

22 ^{exemplum ciceronis} ó uitae philosophia dux ó uirtutis indica(-)

Inconsonantia (14/15) even has a fourth construe-mark. Its relative pronoun *quam* is linked to it by dot-over-dashes, which gives the warning that *Incommoditate* (14) is not an antecedent (of *quam*).

Irish students of Latin at first have great difficulties with *pronomina relativa* because Irish has no relative pronouns. In my 1957-paper I commented on the frequency of the construe-marks linking relative pronouns to their antecedents;²²⁾ I indicated, however, that abundant construe-marks only might be necessary in the teaching of beginners.²³⁾ The scholars who had advanced to the eighth book of Priscian must have mastered their *pronomina relativa* for a long time, and the indirect proof of that lies in the many instances of our column 138*a* where the relative constructions have no 'marks'. Then if we find one marked it must be a special occasion. I can almost hear the voice of the teacher: "Now, be careful—here comes a slight difficulty. Both *incommoditas* and *inconsonantia* are singular and feminine; they both are used in the ablative, they are even linked by *vel*, but . . . *quam* does not refer to *incommoditate*. It only refers to *inconsonantia*."

Fit (18) and *ut* (16) are linked by dot-comma's; *motavit* (20) and *unde* (19) by dot-dashes: it is always important—even for advanced students—to locate the *verbum finitum* of the main sentence and to bring it forward.

Incongruum naturae literarum (19) has the gloss: *i. orribile est*, which—according to Souter's "Glossary of Later Latin"²⁴⁾—can signify: "it is rough" (*horribilis* taking over the meaning of *horridus*).

The Latin gloss *i. ut expelleret incommoditatem* above *motavit* (19) in my opinion needs no explanation. And to appreciate the efficacy of *exemplum ciceronis* above *ó vitae (philosophia dux)* (22) one has only to glance at the (to modern eyes so very) annoying compactness of the MS.-column. An intellectual 'native speaker' of Latin would—even so—easily recognize quotations, but what about an

²²⁾ "Construe Marks", p. 4 (264): "Therefore it is understandable that the 'pronomina relativa' of Latin syntax must have been stumbling-blocks for Irish students, and therefore I am not surprised that construe-marks often link them to their antecedents in the texts under consideration."

²³⁾ "Construe Marks", p. 19 (279): "I get the impression that there are more construe-marks in *Ml.* than in *Sg. Prisc.*, but this might be bound up with the earlier and later study of the two texts in the curriculum. Priscianus might be a text-book for older and/or more advanced students."

²⁴⁾ *A Glossary of Later Latin to 600 A.D.*, compiled by Alexander Souter, Oxford 1949, p. 176.

- 23 trix expultrixque uitiorum. in eodem regiae uir(-)
- 24 gines ut tonstriculae tondebant barbam
- 25 et capillum patris: ab eo quod est tonsor · tons(-)
- 26 trix fecit femininum addita .t. et ex eo femi(-)
is indí asrubart tostriculae
- 27 ninum deminutiuum tonstricula quomodo a nu(-)
..
- 28 trix nutricula : et ea per naturam . . ., Per furtunam
.i. díficunt .i. quae praedíxi
|-
- |- béim fo(-)
 rois in(-)
 sin.

intellectual foreigner? He would prefer to be informed where exactly that quotation started!

It is my impression that the Irish (medieval monastic) libraries were not so well stocked with texts by Cicero as they were with those by Vergil. For some evidence on the Irish knowledge about Vergil's poetry see p. 37 *infra*.

Et (26) is linked to its key-word *tonstrix* (25/6) by dot-dashes; *femininum* (26/7) has been 'expunged' (it is not wrong but it is unnecessary and redundant, though in modern lay-out it could be retained between brackets). The Irish gloss *i. isindí asrubarit to[n]striculæ*²⁵) above *fecit femininum* (26) means literally: "in that (since, because, inasmuch as) he (i.e. Cicero) has said *tonstriculæ*"; a modern translation would be: "by using (the word) *tonstriculæ*".

Nutricula (28) is linked to *deminutivum* (27) (= *diminutivum*) with double-dots to point out that *nutricula* is the next example of a diminutive.

In line 28 three reference-marks (not construe-marks!) became necessary. The more elaborate one refers to the marginal gloss, the other two are guide-lines to the interlinear glosses—so much longer than the brief phrase with which Priscian concludes his examples of "*verba*" "*defectiva*" "*naturae necessitate*" (compare p. 5 *supra*).

The three additions here indicate how puzzling this "*et ea per naturam*" was to the Irish students. Perhaps they had to be reassured that the words were nothing more than a formal ending of the section—a device not needed in a modern lay-out, but far from superfluous in a MS. where the examples of "*verba*" "*defectiva*" "*fortunae casu*" are going to follow directly and on the same line, introduced by "*Per fortunam*". (Even in a modern setting it is possible to keep "*et ea per naturam*", if we translate it colloquially by "so much for these".) Anyway . . .

a thin line joins *et* (28) with the gloss *i. dificiunt* (which at least starts above it), but the next gloss *i. quae praedixi* had to be written so far to the right of its key-word *ea* (28) that two diagonal-line(s)-dot-to-right have been used to link them. The resulting statement reads: *et d(e)ficiunt ea quae praedixi per naturam*. To drive the last nail home as well the marginal gloss adds: *béim*

²⁵) The scribe forgot either *n* or *n*-stroke.

- 29 *quoque duobus modis prohibemur quaedam proferre uel quod*
- 30 *inusitata sunt uel inconcina et turpia uel aspera prola(-)*
.i. nephfograighi
- 31 *tu uidentur esse, INusitata quibus non inueniuntur*
- 32 *usi auctores quamuis proportionem potestatem*
.i. analogia
- 33 *faciant dicendi . ut faux prex dor caus di(-) caus magnum*
.i. cechonistis nombetis ar chuit analoge .i. guide .i. dobiur .i. glenn .i. quamuis inuenitur
- 34 *co for dicio . . positium faris debet esse for*
.i. unde con componitur condicio .i. in prima persona ∴ .i. archiunn
- 35 *pasiuum, ea enim quamuis ratione regulae bene di(-)*
∴

∴
 .i. asbiursa inna
 hisiu inusitata
 esse . uel is dico
 consecraim as
 écoimtig

foris insin, which must be translated as "that is a statement of (the) principle".²⁶)

Videntur (31) and *vel* (30) are linked by double-dots to pick out and bring forward the *verbum finitum* of the second part of the sentence. *Inconcin(n)a* (30) is glossed by the Irish *nephfograigthi*—a learned construction. *Neph-* is a prefix "serving merely to negate the positive sense of the word";²⁷) *fograigthi* is the plural form of the participle belonging to a verb which means "emit a sound", "(re)sound", but which in a grammatical context may be rendered by "pronounce". The gloss therefore must be translated: "(words which are) not pronounced", "not given sound". As such it is not the exact equivalent of *inconcinna*²⁸) but it has to fit in somehow with the still unexplored framework of Irish grammatical terms.

Now follows the passage where Irish scholars got into deep waters because their text-tradition was at fault and the given examples were obscure to foreign speakers (see pp. 7 and 9 *supra*). The difficulties belong especially to the lines 33–35. In line 32 everything is still all right, and the gloss *i. analogia* over *proportione* interestingly illuminates the emergence of a technical term which we nowadays take absolutely for granted. We have all but forgotten that *proportio* was the Latin translation for Greek *αναλογία*, and that the Latin grammarians accepted (a Latin) *analogia* in order to use it in a new grammatical sense.

Even the Irish coined the equivalent *analoige*, which we meet in the Irish interpretation of "*quamvis proportione potestatem faciant* (Hertz: *faciente dicendi*)" (32/33): *i. cechonistis nombetis ar chvuit analoige*". It means: "though they might exist analogically" (literally: "though they might be able that they might exist as to analogy")—observe once again that the Irish gloss starts above the *verbum finitum* of the Latin phrase.

And now things go wrong. What meaning can have "*faux*", "*prez*", "*dor*", etc. for Irish scholars—those words that do 'not exist'? And what about the faulty text-tradition?

²⁶) The *Thesaurus* translates: "that is a recapitulation", but already in 1912 E. J. Gwynn corrected the meaning of "*Béim foris*" in pp. 178–184 of the *Miscellany presented to Kuno Meyer*, ed. by Osborn Bergin and Carl Marstrander. His argumentation was taken over by the *Dictionary of the Irish Language*, s.v. *forus* (Fasc. IV: *fochratae*—*futhu*, col. 372).

²⁷) I quote from *Contributions to a Dictionary of the Irish Language*, publ. by the Royal Irish Academy, fasc. N-O-P, s.v. "1 *nem-* (*neb-*, *neph-*), col. 28.

²⁸) Although the *Thesaurus* and the "Dictionary" (in agreement with the *Thesaurus*) equate the two terms.

lines 31-35 repeated

31 tu uidentur esse, INusitata quibus non inueniuntur

32 usi auctores ^{.i. analogia} quamuis proportionem potestatem

33 faciant dicendi . ut faux prex dor caus di(-) ^{.i. cechonstis nombetis ar chuit analoge .i. guide .i. dobiur .i. glenn .i. quamuis inuenitur caus magnum}

./
 .i. asbiursa inna
 hisiu inusitata
 esse . uel is dico
 consecralm as
 écoimtig

34 co for dicio . . positium faris debet esse for ^{.i. unde con componitur condicio .i. in prima persona} / . / .i. archiunn

35 pasium, ea [.] enim quamuis ratione regulae bene di(-)

If we take Hertz's text as a reference and write out the involved passage in the two versions (disregarding spelling- and punctuation-variants) we can possibly see what has happened.

Hertz: Inusitata sunt quibus non inveniuntur usi auctores
St.Gall=*G*: Inusitata quibus non inveniuntur usi auctores

quamvis proportione potestatem *faciente* dicendi, ut faux prex
quamvis proportione potestatem *faciant* dicendi, ut faux prex dor

dicio. positivum faris debet esse for passivum do
caus dico for dicio. positivum faris debet esse for passivum

debet esse dor. ea enim (etc.)

ea enim (etc.)

According to the variant readings of Hertz it is only *G*—and not the other codices “a monachis ‘Scotis’ sive Hibernicis descripti”, namely *L* (Leidensis) and *K* (Caroliruhensis)—which misses “*sunt*” after “*Inusitata*”,²⁹) whereas all three ‘libri scotice scripti’ have the *verbum finitum* “*faciant*” instead of the reading “*faciente*”; they all three have “*caus dico for*”³⁰) and miss “*do debet esse dor*”.³¹)

It follows then that in the peripheral Irish tradition some examples: “*caus dico*” (as an additional one), “*dor*” and “*for*” (two anticipated ones) were written as glosses, and afterwards became incorporated in the main text. After that “*do debet esse dor*” was lost—either because “*passivum*” stood at the end of a line and some scribe made a mechanical mistake, or because a scribe inferred that “*dor*” had been mentioned earlier and so need not be repeated. (In that case he would have been strengthened in his opinion by the ‘repetition’ of “*faris*”-“*for*”, but then he forgot to erase “*passivum*”). From this on every teacher had to shift for himself.³²)

As to the meaning of some of the ‘non-existing’ words (or forms) Irish scholarship added quite clever glosses. *Prex* (33), the analogical (nom.) singular of *preces*, has been translated by *i. guide* (“prayer”). *Dor* (33) is glossed by *i. dobiur* (“I give”). That is no translation but I would say that the Irish teacher was forced to this concession because of a peculiarity of Irish ‘grammar’.

²⁹) The reading is not incorrect, for that matter. It is shorter and somewhat unusual.

³⁰) Only *G* appears to have the (earlier) *dor* after *prex*.

³¹) According to Hertz *K* has the words added by a second (?) hand. (In my opinion this could be an emendation taken over from a Continental centre.)

³²) Judging from Hertz's *Variae lectiones* the passage appears to have been difficult in Continental class-rooms too.


lines 31-35 repeated

31 tu uidentur esse, INusitata quibus non inueniuntur

32 usu auctores ^{.i. analogia} quamuis proportione potestatem

33 faciant dicendi . ut faux prex dor caus di(-) ^{.i. cechonstis nombetis ar chuit analoige .i. guide .i. dobiur .i. glenn .i. quamuis inuenitur caus magnum}

/.
i. asblursa inna
hisiu inusitata
esse . uel is dico
consecraim as
écolimtig

34 co for dicio .. positium faris debet esse for ^{.i. unde con componitur condicio .i. in prima persona} /.
/. .i. archium 

35 pasium, ea ^{.i.} enim quamuis ratione regulae bene di(-)

The Irish 'passive' of the first person singular is expressed by means of a third person singular verbal form with infixed pronoun (of the first singular); in this case the result would (theoretically) be "*do-m-berar*" or "*do-m-berr*". The teacher must have feared that—if he used such a form as a gloss—the relevant point of the Latin example would be disregarded, namely the non-existence of a first singular passive as distinct from an existing "*datur*". In this difficulty he opted for a first singular form which may mean in shorthand: "(*dor* is a non-existing form related to) I give". It even may mean in addition: "we do not use it either".³³⁾

It seems to me, on the other hand, that with the next gloss a real mistake was perpetuated. The gloss *i. glenn* has been written above *caus* (33), and the *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus* edits as one statement a combination of two glosses: *i. glenn i. quamuis inuenitur caus magnum*.³⁴⁾ I believe however that "*glenn*" does not refer to *caus* but to *faux* (33). (*Glenn* means "a valley", "a hollow", and would be an acceptable translation of a non-existent singular of *fauces*.) The gloss must have become separated from its key-word, one of the possible causes being that the gloss *i. cechonistis nombetis ar chuit analoige* on the same line was so very extensive and came so far to the right.

Even so, a reference-mark could (and ought to) have righted matters. Perhaps in some exemplar this was forgotten or overlooked.

And now we are already entangled in the mysterious *caus dico* which Irish scholarship—this follows from the interlinear and the marginal gloss!—could not make out, and neither can I. As *dico* certainly is an 'existing' word, the example (of *inusitatum esse*) has to lie in the combination of *caus* and *dico*, that is in the unusualness (or impossibility?) of *caus* being accusative. If this is right I understand the gloss (starting above *dico*—the *verbum finitum*—as is customary) *i. quamuis inuenitur caus magnum* to mean: "(the combination of *caus* and *dico* is not used,) though *caus magnum* occurs."

³³⁾ As far as I can make out the forms *do-m-berar* and *do-m-berr* do not occur in texts which have come down to us. (They are not listed in Pedersen's "Verbalverzeichnis".)

³⁴⁾ *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus* II, p. 152 (gloss 12 in the middle of the page).

lines 31-35 repeated

31 tu uidentur esse, INusitata quibus non inueniuntur

32 usi auctores quamuis ^{.i. analogia} proportione potestatem

33 ^{.i. cechonistis nombetis ar chuit analoige .i. guide .i. dobtur .i. glenn .i. quamuis Inuenitur} faciant dicendi · ut faux prex dor caus di(-) ^{caus magnum}

/
i. asblursa Inna
hista Inusitata
esse . uel is dico
consecraim as
écolimtg

34 / ^{.i. unde con componitur condicio .i. in prima persona} / ^{.i. archlunn}
co for dicio .. positium faris debet esse for **G**

35 ⁽ pasium, ea ^{..} enim quamuis ratione regulae bene di(-)

But then what is *caus*? Modern scholarship has concluded—from the displaced gloss *i. glenn*—that *caus* means *cavus* (*cavus*).³⁵ Even if true this would not help us here in the least. How could this word ever be an example of a word “which might exist analogically”? (For it does exist!) Which brings us again to the combination *caus dico*, and—possibly—to the group of legal expressions.

If I dared venture a long shot I would suggest that in some Irish classroom ‘once upon a time’ the word *causidicus* (solicitor, barrister) was mentioned and explained. (In fact it is actually once mentioned and ‘explained’ in the seventeenth book of Priscianus³⁶)—in a part of the text which the St. Gall-codex now lacks.) And I can imagine the starting of an argument like this: “If a form like *causidicus* is right, why cannot we use *caus dico*?”

The topicality of the example would be lost early. At any rate we see Irish scholarship doubtful and undecided in the second—the marginal—gloss which is linked to (*caus*) *dico* by a reference-mark (: diagonal-line-dot-to-left) and reads: *i. asbiursa innahisii inusitata esse. uel is dico consecraim as écoimtig*. This means: “I emphatically say these *inusitata esse* [in other words: the example must be considered Priscianus’ responsibility??], or it is *dico* ‘I consecrate’ which is infrequent (, rare).” Here the problem must rest for the moment.

Now we reach less troubled waters. The anticipating *for* needed no gloss because the explanation followed so shortly, and the Irish knew perfectly in which group—not a verbal one!—*dicio* (34) belongs. It is the unusual *nom. sg.* of the substantive which means ‘authority’ and of which the compound with *con-* (*condicio*) occurs frequently. That is why the gloss reads: *i. unde con componitur condicio*.

The end of the line offers some difficulties. The most elusive of these is the problem whether the Irish schools read “*positivum faris debet esse for pas(s)ivum*” (34/35) as a single statement, and if so, what they thought it meant. (We can and even must take into account that the text of lines 34/35 is corrupt but that the Irish did not know this.)³⁷ The most reassuring assumption would be that the Irish teacher in the classroom cut across the dangling

³⁵) *Thesaurus* II, p. 152, note c: “a corrupt text, *caus* is taken as ‘hollow’”; and see Contributions to a Dictionary (fasc. G, publ. in 1955) s.v. *glenn*: “A valley, a hollow; common in place-names. gl. *caus* (=cavus), Sg. 138a12.”


Then once again: what is—what can be in that case—the meaning of *caus magnum*?

³⁶) I found it through the *Index Rerum et Vocabulorum*, Keil (III)-Hertz (II), p. 566.

³⁷) Here *GLK* have the same reading (see p. 25 *supra*).

lines 34-35 repeated

/.
i. asbiursa imna
hisiu inusitata
esse . uel is dico
consecraim as
écolimtig

- 34 co for ^{/. .i. unde con} dicio . . ^{.i. in prima persona} positium faris debet esse for ^{/. .i. archiunn} 
- 35 pasium, ea ^{/.} enim ^{..} quamuis ratione regulae bene di(-)
- 36 cantur tamen quia in usu auctorum non inueniuntur recusa(-)
- 37 mus dicere . . INconcina uero uel turpia uel aspera prola(-)
- 38 tu uidentur esse ^{.i. analogia bo metuo} metuturus uel metuiturus nutri(-)

“*pas(s)ivum*” with an “I don’t know what Priscian wants with the word here”, but that hypothesis is too good to be true. (Neither can we argue from the silence of a non-glossed “passivum”.) The problem remains.

Within the limits of the (accurate) passage up to the end of line 34 the two reference-marks are both clever and to the point. They act in combination. The large and elaborate one (: a circle with a horizontal line starting from the centre to the right, and two dots under it) is repeated after an extensive interval—the two signs link across more than five columns of text—and we locate the second one through the smaller mark (diagonal-line-dot-to-right) which tells us that it bears on *for* and that we must look “ahead” (this is what the Irish gloss *.i. archiunn* means). In this way we find “*for faris fatur*” in a long enumeration of “*deponentia*”, column *a* of p. 141³⁸ (Keil-Hertz I p. 379). A cross-reference of quality indeed!

This only leaves a small uncertainty about *.i. in prima persona*, the gloss over *positivum*. Is it wholly Latin and does it then mean: “with regard to the first person”, or is *in* here the Irish (definite) article and does the gloss state: “*positivum* is the *prima persona*” (according to Irish syntax: “the *prima persona* is *positivum*)?³⁹ I cannot decide. But at all events the Irish knew that *faris* was not the comparative of *for*.

Ea (35) is linked to *faux* (33) by a construe-mark which probably is a circle-segment-dot-to-right (it looks in the photostat like a small *t*). If the class asks what *ea* stands for, the construe-mark leads to the examples *faux*, *prex*, *dor*, etc. *Enim* (35) is linked by double-dots to *recusamus* (36/7)—it always is very important for the Irish to locate the *verbum finitum* of the main clause.

Metuturus (38) has a gloss which I had great difficulties in making out. The word *bo* (above *-us*) was easy enough, but what did come next? And the first word of the gloss (separated from the others because of intervening symbols of the primary text—compare the spacing of the long glosses over lines 12 and 14), was it the nota for *unde*? After many efforts I read the last word of the gloss as *metuo* (with the Irish high form of *E*), and then I saw that the first word did not begin with ‘*u*’ but with an open ‘*a*’. It was not *unde* but a bold suspension for *analogia*. All this resulted in the reading *.i. analogia bo metuo*. According to Irish syntax *metuo* is the subject of this nominal sentence, and the gloss states—in

³⁸) The enumeration of examples starts at the end of column *b*, p. 140.

³⁹) The argument that the Irish article in the feminine singular nominative case ought to lenate, does not apply here.

my opinion—that a form of (the verb) *metuo* has some (material) analogy with a form of (the substantive) *bo*.

This is not so cryptic as it sounds. In the first three lines of the next column (our +1, +2, +3) Priscian teaches that in the form *bovibus* “*euphoniae causa concisio facta est mediae syllabae*”, resulting in *bobus*. So the Irish gloss on *metuturus* (38) notes that the *participium futuri* of *metuo* is—or ought to be⁴⁰)—*euphoniae causa* “*meturus*”, by ‘concision’ of the second syllable.

Quod (39) is anchored by two construe-marks. The most important one is the ‘*adit*-gloss’ over it: *.i. adit facta est*, bringing forward the *verbum finitum* (*facta est* in +2) of the second part of the sentence—which is much too far away (six whole lines, running over into a new column) to be linked by a construe-sign—in order that the Irish class may read “*Inconcina . . . videntur esse : metuturus vel metuiturus, nutritrix, quod facta est concisio mediae syllabae euphoniae causa*” (“... since (because) destruction (mutilation) of the second syllable has occurred (has been done) for the sake of pleasing sound”).

In line 39 *quod* is the temporal-causal conjunction leading up to the clause which warrants both examples, *nutritrix* and *metu(i)turus*, but only *nutritrix* is explained and worked out. This must be the reason why *quod* and *nutritrix* (38/9) are linked by double-dots. Indeed, *nutritrix* is so much in evidence that there is at first ambiguity about the meaning of *quod*; does the class think that it might be the relative pronoun? Again I can imagine the deep, rumbling voice of the teacher:

“Now pay attention here. *Quod* is not the relative pronoun, and *nutritrix* is not its antecedent, though it could be as to form. For *nutritrix* as a female person requires the pronoun *quae*, but *quod* could be used to represent *nutritrix* as a specific example of a *nomen*, the word *nutritrix*. However, in this sentence . . .”, etc.⁴¹)

The remaining construe-marks (of the column) determine the logical line of the argument about *nutritrix*: *quamvis* (39), *debuisset* (39) and *tamen* (+2) are linked by dot-dashes, and in addition *debuisset* (39) with *enim* (40) by colons.

⁴⁰) As far as I am aware the form is purely theoretical.

⁴¹) Certainly Priscian’s sentence (with its explanatory interruption about *nutritrix*) is of an unfortunate complexity, and something of an anacoluthon lingers in *quod*.

41 motant .or. in rix · et faciunt feminina doc(-)

42 tor · doctrix uictor uictrix · *cum igitur* masculinum sit
.i. lar testimā

(138b)

+ 1 nutritor · et ex eo secundum analogiam nascebatur nutritrix eu(-)

+ 2 phonīae tamen causa concisio facta est mediae syl(-)

+ 3 labae sicut bobus pro bouibus , . .

The linking of *tamen* (+2) with *debuiset* (39) appears to have been acceptable because the *verbum finitum* of that part of the sentence (*facta est* of +2) already had been brought forward by the *adit*-gloss.

Finally there is the (Irish) gloss under *cum igitur* (42): *.i. iar testimin*, which in my opinion has to be translated as "according to (the) testimony" (or "according to (the) evidence").

The *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus* reads *iar**testimin* as a compound, and renders it by: "i.e. the end of the period". I cannot accept this; for one thing such a meaning would not make any sense here.⁴²)

Remains at long last the elaborate construe-mark over the third word of the first line, *alia* (1) (see text on p. 12 *supra*). It looks like a circle-segment with two dots (one over, one under) and does not link up with a word in column 138*a*. Therefore it had to link up with something in 137*b* and I could not check it, having no photostat of page 137. The problem became a small obsession.

When I got the photostat the construe-mark-system was (once more) beautifully vindicated. The sign over *alia* (1) is linked to the sign under *rogat* (-3), and notes that "*quando eadem persona et agit et patitur ab alia*" the examples *rogat ut sui causa facias, petit ut sibi concedas, precatur ut se custodias* (-3/-2) have to be remembered or reconsidered. (The very last construe-mark of column 137*b*: dot-in-circle-dash-to-right over *a se* (-1) links with its partner under *penitet* (-5) and recalls the examples *penitet illum sui, invidet sibi, accusat se* in relation to the grammatical theory of "*quando eadem persona et agit et patitur a se*" (compare p. 6 *supra*.)

⁴²) I am inclined to challenge the occurrence (and hence the 'translation') of this compound even in the few other instances listed in the *Contributions to a Dictionary* (fasc. I 1, publ. in 1952) col. 35.

Summing up

In my opinion it now is proven that the investigation of a random column from the St. Gall-Priscian gives insight into the method of teaching Latin Grammar by Irish scholars of the ninth century.

That method was thorough and on a considerable level—the more so if we take into account that it was an achievement by (and in the context of) an alien culture. The Irish teachers were interested, they were intellectually stimulated, but they were not over-awed by the Latin language. They compared Latin and Irish on a basis of formal differences, not in terms of higher and lower. Their ninth-century outlook on Latin texts and Roman literature appears to have been unbiased and surprisingly ‘modern’.⁴³⁾

Therefore it is unseemly to judge the ninth-century teachers if we do not pass beyond the data of the “*Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus*”. In my Construe-mark-paper I called “the systematic tearing apart of the glosses in Irish from the Latin ones and from the complicated system of signs which *together* constitute the commentary on difficult Latin texts” a “continuous lack of respect”.⁴⁴⁾

And therefore I here venture to voice my disagreement with the opening paragraphs of Osborn Bergin’s “The Native Irish Grammarian” (The Sir John Rhŷs Memorial Lecture, read 9 November 1938). The beginning of that lecture is published like this:

“The ancient Irish knew nothing about grammar. In that they were like other nations and peoples. Even the Greeks did not learn to distinguish the parts of speech until the days of Dionysius Thrax, the father of all that write school grammars, in the first century B.C.

The Greek system was easily adapted to Latin, and in the Middle Ages grammar meant Latin grammar. There is a ninth-century copy of Priscian’s *Institutiones Grammaticae* (Codex Sangallensis 904), written by Irishmen, which contains thousands of Irish glosses, including Irish

⁴³⁾ It was only in the following centuries that the Irish ‘literati’ became ‘medieval’ and remained so until the nineteenth century.

⁴⁴⁾ At the bottom of the first page.

explanations of the technical terminology, but this has nothing to do with the study of Irish grammar. The grammatical systems of Irish and Latin are far apart, and in any case there was in those days no reason why the Latin system should be applied to Irish. The motive was lacking.”

To comment exhaustively on these paragraphs would require a separate paper, but for my purpose here that is quite unnecessary. I am perfectly sure that Bergin never would have said: “but this has nothing to do with the study of Irish grammar”, if he had seen the careful network of construe-marks, construe-glosses, cross-references and technical terms in Codex Sangallensis 904. For it means that the ninth-century Irish teachers *were aware* that “the grammatical systems of Irish and Latin” were “far apart”—they *compared* the systems, and so they *must have known* about “the grammatical system of Irish”.⁴⁵)

The ninth-century teachers-on-University-level in Ireland acted like modern French scholars teaching English, or perhaps like English dons teaching Chinese or Russian. Of course they were not infallible. Usually teachers have no *perfect* knowledge of a foreign language. But they were ‘litterati’ and had a cultured appreciation of Roman literary texts—notably the works of Vergil—because they felt pride in their own history, language and literature.

I find it most revealing when I discover—nearly at the end of the b.-column of Sg. p. 142—over the beginning of a quotation from the fourth book of the Aeneid (: *Virgilius in IIII Aeneidos: Quid moror? an mea Pygmalion dum moenia frater Destruat?*, Keil-Hertz I, p. 389, lines 26–28) the minuscule gloss *dido dixit*, and when it moreover proves to be correct. It gives me the same impression as if I heard a modern teacher reminding his students: “You remember? Ophelia says that in the third act”, and I like it very much. Even a single instance like this would make me infer: “That teacher is no dry stick; he knows and loves his Shakespeare.”

Mutatis mutandis, that Irishman of the ninth century could and did remind his pupils—in a grammar-lesson—about the story-pattern of the Aeneid. That man was no dry grammarian;

⁴⁵) As for the end of Bergin’s sentence: “and in any case there was in those days no reason why the Latin system should be applied to Irish”—it ought to be stated that nowadays too, and in the light of modern linguistics, *there is no reason whatsoever* to apply the Latin system to Irish.

he knew and loved his Vergil.⁴⁶⁾ And it is a thing which I never could have found out from the *Thesaurus Palaeohibernicus*.

I have become convinced that it is of the utmost importance that Celticists at long last inaugurate a new phase of the study of Old-Irish glosses. This means turning back to the Manuscripts, and investigating page by page their *whole* information.

⁴⁶⁾ There is much more to be gathered from Sangallensis 904 about the Irish knowledge of Vergil, but I cannot go into that here.